

STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
DIVISION OF WATER RESOURCES  
Bureau of Water Quality Planning and Management

MEMORANDUM

TO: Robert Reed, Supervising Engineer (Passaic Basin)  
FROM: William Althoff, Ground-Water Management Section  
RE: L. E. Carpenter Company, Wharton  
DATE: May 2, 1979

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On March 12, 1979 I made an on-site inspection of subject project with Robert Plumb.

The site is on terminal moraine deposits next to the Rockaway River. The surface is a heterogeneous mix from boulders to fine-grained material. The movement of chemicals to the river from the plant may be tortuous due to the chaotic interfingering and lensing of material characteristic of moraine deposits.

The test pits behind the plant have approximately equal water levels and are in hydraulic contact with the river since (I am told) their levels fluctuate with the stage of the river. In short, chemicals in the ground water introduced by Carpenter can reach the Rockaway.

Housekeeping here is deplorable; there is, for example, badly contaminated water in the storage tank pits behind the plant. I have no doubt that ground-water contamination has occurred beneath the property. Monitor wells will confirm this, but the pits could be sampled in the meantime if evidence is needed. Stream sampling above and below the plant may or may not be fruitful but is recommended.

There is a water supply well on-site near the river. This has been abandoned, allegedly because of iron problems. This should be verified if possible.

Recommendations:

1. The Rockaway River valley contains several large capacity wells downstream. The operations of this and other nearby industries on the river pose a threat to these wells and the valley fill aquifer. L. E. Carpenter and these other firms require further investigation.
2. Monitor wells should be installed at the Carpenter site, and sampled for the organics known to exist on-site. Wells will document contamination in my opinion. Sampling of the Rockaway above and below the plant for low-level organic contamination also is recommended.
3. Large capacity storage of chemical agents is conducted here. Proof of storage integrity should be sought, or the below-ground tanks tested.
4. A ground-water decontamination program should be demanded. Given the proximity of the river and the possible large volumes of water in-

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volved, some type of containment scheme may be best. I believe Carpenter's consultant has already proposed something of this kind. The Department should press for a full-scale program, one involving monitoring, containment and clean-up. This Office remains available as needed in this matter.

5. Pressure should be exerted on the Solid Waste Administration for a decision on the sludges dumped behind the plant.

WEA:wmc